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City of Barrie

Final

International Relations Committee

Tuesday, September 5, 2023 | **6:00 PM** | **Huronia Room "A"**

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT
For consideration by the Finance and Responsible Governance Committee on September 27, 2023.

The meeting was called to order by Co-Chairs, Councillor, J. Harris and Mark Sachkiw at 6:01 p.m. The following were in attendance for the meeting:

Present: 13 - Councillor J. Harris
M. Sachkiw - Co Chair and Arras
Deputy Mayor R. Thomson
LCol G. Johnston - Base Borden
J. Babcock - Global Perspectives Program
C. Hassey
W. Hay
A. Jones
J. Massie
L. Palson - Georgian College
J. M. Pigeon - German Twinning
B. Sergeant - Harrogate
S. Scully-Pratt - Youth Ambassadors

Absent: 2 - T. Gardiner - Japan Twinning
K. Watson - Georgian College

ALSO PRESENT:
Mayor, A. Nuttall

STAFF:
Business Development Officer, N. Gavarre
Director of Economic and Creative Economy, S. Schlichter
Executive Assistant to the Mayor, E. Chappell
Legislative Coordinator, S. Drury
Legislative Coordinator, T. Maynard.

The International Relations Committee met and discussed the following:

SECTION "A"

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Councillor, J. Harris provided welcoming remarks, and Committee members and City staff provided roundtable introductions.

Mayor, A. Nuttall praised the Committee for its work done in the past and stated that now is the time to broaden the scope of the Committee, build on its foundation, and make use of it through an economic development lens.

Mayor Nuttall encouraged the Committee to look at what other cities, like Toronto and Brampton, are doing in this regard, and to consider which international cities would be the best fit for the City to partner with. Mayor Nuttall recommended considering the United States and provided a suggestion of the State of Michigan.

SAGINAW MICHIGAN

The Committee discussed broadening the City's ties with Saginaw, Michigan, and how to turn cultural and educational relationships into economic development opportunities. They also discussed the connection between education and business.

Jamie Massie highlighted Northwood University's previous shared agreement with Georgian College and their role in forming the Automotive School.

Leslie Palson stated that Georgian College ensures education is tied to economic development. She advised that representatives of Georgian College meet with the trade commissioners on a regular basis, including the Georgian College Auto Show.

Mayor Nuttall encouraged the Committee to savour the activities that have already been done and explore opportunities through individual networks and relationships.

PRESENTATION CONCERNING INVEST BARRIE - INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Stephanie Schlichter, Director of Economic and Creative Economy, and Nora Gavarre, Business Development Officer provided a presentation concerning Invest Barrie and International Economic Development.

Ms. Schlichter discussed slides concerning the following topics:

- The mandate of the International Relations Committee and goal of Invest Barrie;
- The International Investments such as the following:
    - Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) - Inbound (Investment Attraction; and
    - Canadian Direct Investment Abroad (CDIA) Outbound (Business Retention and Expansion).
- The Foreign Trade Agreements such as the following:
    - The Canada-Unite States- Mexico Agreement (CUSMA); and
    - Canadian-European Union Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA.).
- Invest Barrie will pursue in 2024, FDI opportunities in the United States and Germany, specifically the cities of Saginaw and Chicago;
- A chart illustrating Invest Barrie's 2023 trade show and mission activities;
- A chart illustrating Invest Barrie's 2024 proposed trade show and mission activities;
- Invest Barrie Familiarization Tours (FAM) of the City for delegations; and
- Canadian Direct Investment Abroad (CDIA) and the role of Invest Barrie.

Members of Committee asked a number of questions to Ms. Schlichter and Ms. Gavarre and received responses.

The Committee discussed existing and potential connection opportunities with other cities, and key areas to focus on including healthcare, education, and automotive business.

The International Relations Committee met and recommends adoption of the following recommendation(s):

SECTION "B"

INVESTIGATION - ECONOMIC/TRADE PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

That staff in the Economic and Creative Economy Department investigate the feasibility of a potential economic/trade partnership with the State of Michigan and the City's existing International partnerships and sister cities and report back to the International Relations Committee.

This matter was recommended (Section "B") to Finance and Responsible Governance Committee for consideration of adoption at its meeting to be held on 9/27/2023.

The International Relations Committee met and reports as follows:

SECTION "C"

PLANNING FOR 2024

The Committee discussed the 2024 commitments established under the previous Committee which need to be honoured, and the benefits and costs associated with them.

The Committee agreed that going forward, they will undertake a governance review of how it does business and gather a wish list of opportunities to pursue.

The Committee highlighted the need to consider business opportunities that are economically quantifiable and provide the best return on investment as well as emphasized the value of face-to-face interactions and building on the solid relationships formed by the previous Committee.

HARROGATE, UNITED KINGDOM

Bill Sergeant provided an update concerning Harrogate, United Kingdom. He advised that in June of this year, two visits took place during which two delegates and a U16 rugby team were hosted.

Mr. Sergeant reported that the Committee approved the expenditure of funds from the International Relations Committee budget up to $3,000.00 for hosting the two delegates. He noted that the costs came under the budget amount by $400.00.

Mr. Sergeant reported that the Committee had approved the expenditure of funds from the International Relations Committee budget up to $20,000.00 for hosting the U16 rugby team, and the costs came under the budgeted amount by $4,156.00.

YOUTH AMBASSADORS PROGRAM

Shannon Scully-Pratt provided an update concerning the Youth Ambassadors Program. She advised that nine delegates visited Japan this summer as part of the youth exchange program.

Ms. Scully-Pratt reported that the Committee had previously approved the expenditure of funds from the International Relations Committee budget up to $5,000.00 for airfare travel for two adult chaperones, but that costs for flights had increased by an additional $1,490.87.

The Committee approved an expenditure from the International Relations Committee budget of $1,490.87 for additional expenses related to airfare costs for the two adult chaperones who traveled to Japan in August 2023 with the youth ambassador's delegation.

GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES PROGRAM

Jamie Babcock provided an update concerning the Global Perspectives Program. Mr. Babcock advised that this September a group of students from Zweibrucken, Germany will be hosted for four week by students at Innisdale Secondary School. Members of the Committee asked a number of questions of Mr. Babcock and received responses.

The Committee approved an expenditure of funds from the International Relations Committee budget up to $8,000 for costs associated with transportation and goodbye party for the student delegation from Zweibrucken, Germany visiting the City of Barrie in September/October, 2023.

The Committee discussed the City historically acting as a financial conduit for the Global Perspectives Program.

ZWEIBRUCKEN, GERMANY

Jean Maurice Pigeon provided an update concerning Zweibrucken, Germany. Mr. Pigeon advised that he will have a presentation created by Zweibrucken delegates for a future meeting. Mr. Pigeon further advised that he will be visiting Zweibrucken, Germany in November and during his visit he will be meeting with the Lord Mayor.

MURAYAMA, JAPAN

Mark Sachkiw provided a historical background of the City's relationship with Murayama, Japan. Mr. Sachkiw advised that a citizen delegation was going to be invited here for the 25th anniversary of the twinning relationship, but that it was cancelled due to the COVID 19 pandemic.

ARRAS, FRANCE

The Committee discussed this matter at the time of the presentation by Invest regarding Barrie International Development.

2023 COMMITTEE BUDGET UPDATE/ LEGACY FUND/ INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS WEBSITE

The Committee agreed that the 2023 Committee budget had already been discussed.

The Committee agreed to defer discussion on the legacy fund update until the next meeting.

The Committee discussed the International Partners website. Mark Sachkiw provided a historical background of the International Partners website. They

made suggestions on changes to be made to the website including whether the City should run the website, and if a subcommittee should be established to consider this matter.

NEXT MEETING

The next Committee meeting has been scheduled for October 2, 2023.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

CHAIRMAN